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DEBATES
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PROCEEDINGS

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Time: 8:00 p.m.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

HON. BEN HANUSCHAK (Burrows): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Firstly, I wish to congratulate you and wish you well in your second sitting of this House in your position of Speaker. I am sure that all members will agree that you have certainly discharged your duties and responsibilities well during the last session and we have every reason to hope and believe that you will do so equally well, perhaps even better in the forthcoming session. I suppose it's customary on the part of many members in their taking part in Throne Speech debate to offer a pledge of obedience to you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I will not, and I can't, make that pledge to you, Mr. Speaker, because I doubt whether I'll be able to keep it. I may have to break it from time to time. So therefore, Mr. Speaker, all I could promise you is that I will conduct myself in the House in accordance with my interpretation of the rules and I'm sure that in most cases my interpretation and yours will be similar. So then there will be no problem. If on occasion, Mr. Speaker, our interpretation should differ, well we'll cross that bridge when we come to it. I suppose on occasion, Mr. Speaker, I will yield to your ruling. There might be instances when I or other members of the House may have to challenge your ruling, but you have been a member of this House for long enough, Mr. Speaker, to know that that is what the parliamentary process is all about.

I would wish to on this occasion, Mr. Speaker, to also join with other members of the House in congratulating, and wishing well to Their Excellencies, representatives of Her Majesty in Canada, and looking forward to their joining with us in tomorrow's sitting of the House.

I suppose Mr. Speaker, that for the record, and I am certain that this is probably an oversight on the part of the First Minister, the Interim Leader of the government party, when he, in making reference to His Excellency, he referred to him as the former Leader of the Official Opposition of the House. Well, but the fact of the matter is, and I would want to get this on the record for the benefit of some researcher five, six, ten decades from now, long after we're gone, who may come across this particular portion in Hansard, and my concern is that someone may read the Interim Leader of the government party's comments in the House made earlier today, when he was described as a Leader of the Official Opposition at one time. But, the fact that the matter is that he was also the First Minister of this province. Now, it is true, that the last position that he held was that of Leader of the Official Opposition but, I'm sure that all Honourable Members would agree that when we refer to Senator Roblin in this House, we refer to him as the former Premier of the House, and not the former Member for Wolseley, which was the position that he held in this House when he occupied the seat presently being occupied by the Member for Minnedosa. And, that was his last position in the House but, as a matter of courtesy we formally refer to him as the former Premier of the House. Well, so much for that, Mr. Speaker.

I also would like to congratulate publicly and wish well to the Leader of the Official Opposition. And I think that, at this point in time, a bit of history should be recalled because the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Official Opposition, is the Member for the constituency of Selkirk, is a matter of some significance to Manitobans of Ukrainian origin. And the matter of significance is, for the benefit of some of those chirping in the background who may not be interested in Manitoba's history, is the fact that in 1911 in the federal constituency of Selkirk, there ran for office one Wasyl Holowacky. —(Interjection)— Yes, he wasn't Irish but was a good Ukrainian name and I'm sure that he became a good Canadian upon meeting the necessary citizenship qualifications, which I'm sure he did, because otherwise he wouldn't have been able to run for office, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Holowacky did not win the seat. I would suspect that if he took any votes away from anybody it likely was from the Conservative candidate, who did win it by a very slim margin, by 80 some-odd votes. Mr. Holowacky, a newcomer to this country, all he managed to garner at that time was 234 votes, but from that little seat, where the seeds of Socialism were first planted in Canadian soil amongst the people of Ukrainian origin — pleasant home — involving a former Member of this

House, Taras Ferley, who was elected in 1915, who was involved in the organization of the Ukrainian Socialist Movement there. And he was one of that group, Mr. Speaker, and made his mark on the political scene as a Socialist candidate. That was 68 years ago, Mr. Speaker, and some decades later both federally and provincially, those of us in this House will recall that both ridings did see Socialist representation at the federal level by Scotty Bryce, then more recently, Doug Rowland, and at the Provincial level by our present Leader of the New Democratic Party.

So, for that reason, Mr. Speaker, the Manitobans of Ukrainian origin take particular pride in the fact that the present Leader is one representing Selkirk constituency, having the type of historical background that it has, and I suppose that the election of the Honourable Member for Selkirk as our Leader, reaffirms the political stance, the attitude of the people in that riding and in other ridings in the Province of Manitoba.

Upon reading the Throne Speech debate and checking through some papers in my office, I came across something which I had the pleasure of seeing several months ago, last June. It was an art show of Klaus Stack political posters at the Arthur Street Gallery. Perhaps some honourable members from the government's side also saw this show. And at it, there was one poster — and I regret, Mr. Speaker, that I only have one copy of it and a very small one which is only about one-sixteenth of the original size — but because I cannot share it with everyone while I'm speaking, I will try to describe it to you, Mr. Speaker, as best I can. I will also hold it up and, as I have said, you will not be able to see all that much from where honourable members are sitting, but the poster shows a narrow lane through a dilapidated tenement dwelling area, bricks falling and a thatched roof, having been in a state of disrepair for many, many years; a little addition is built up on the second storey, and that sort of thing. Just a very narrow lane, and coming down that lane is a monstrous, shiny chauffeur-driven Rolls-Royce. And the captain reads, Mr. Speaker, "For Wider Streets, Vote Conservative."

Mr. Speaker, that is so typical of the general attitude and philosophy of this government, that not only do material things come first, but material things for the rich come first. Material things for the Rolls-Royce owners come first, that it is more important to build a freeway, to build a wide street, whatever, for the chauffeur-driven Rolls-Royce limousine than it is to provide proper housing for the people living in the slum tenement area. That is so typical of this government.

And then I suppose more recently —(Interjection)— Well, you know, when I saw this in June, I thought, well, this is so typical of the present government, and then this was reaffirmed a few weeks ago, you know, the general tone, theme and thrust of this government as set by the honourable minister for the birds. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, when the honourable minister for the birds announced and circulated all through Manitoba his survey on caged birds — his survey on caged birds. You know, in the face of what his colleagues are saying, preaching restraints, cutbacks and the need to very carefully and on occasion ruthlessly prioritizing government programs, what does the Honourable Minister for Economic Development — no, I'm not sure what his portfolio is because the envelope says "Industry and Commerce" — no, the letterhead says "Economic Development" — the Honourable Minister of Economic Development comes out with a program for the birds. He is going to do a survey on the basis of which, he hopes, he says it would indicate the need for a professional bird service.

Speaker, you know, the return envelope is addressed to Winnipeg, postal code R3C 9Z9, that is the code for business reply mail, but I took a look at the letterhead, on the survey form itself, and the postal zone is that of the Minister's office, because within this postal zone his department has no other offices. So I presume, Mr. Speaker, that he himself, professionally, will analyze the returns that he gets, professionally will assess the returns that he gets, and professionally will make whatever recommendations he wants to make with respect to his professional bird service, to take care of diarrhea and constipation and feather mould and poor health and nervousness and breathing problems . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I hope the House will give the member who is speaking the courtesy of listening to his contributions. The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, we hear via the grapevine that the Minister of Economic Development does not have a professional bird service program in mind at all but some bird seed growing and selling operation.

MR. DOERN: A little seed money.

MR. HANUSCHAK: From some of the members in the back bench. But then, Mr. Speaker, if that is what the honourable member has in mind, then why this devious method of some sort of a professional bird service? Now, I think, Mr. Speaker, that I have dwelt on this program much longer

that the program deserves and I am sure that you would agree with me, Mr. Speaker, but I simply wanted to point out the stupidity of this government's order of priorities. That was the only reason why I wanted to put this down on the record, Mr. Speaker.

Now, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I ought not just blame this minister. Perhaps some of the blame should be shared by his predecessor because I would suspect that when he was assigned this portfolio, that when he went through the file drawers in his office, that he had found a number of programs which he had inherited from his predecessor which were no less flighty than this one. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, some time in the late fall, there was a radio advertising campaign calling for applications for 350 jobs somewhere in southern Manitoba — the location wasn't all that definite, in the vicinity of Altona. —(Interjection)— No, it wasn't Sprague, it was Altona, and a telephone number was given on the radio to call the number for further particulars. I did telephone the number, Mr. Speaker, only to find that it is a number of a government telephone. It was a number of an office in the Department of Industry and Commerce.

So my first question was, I wanted to know the name of the firm that is advertising for employees, or on whose behalf we, the taxpayers, are spending money to canvass for applicants for employment. I was denied that information. I was told that the identity of the company cannot be revealed because the company had not as yet located in Manitoba and until such time as it locates, its identity cannot be revealed. So I said, well, I would be interested in applying and there may be others who may be interested in applying for employment there but I am sure that we would like to know who our employer is because it may be an employer that we may choose not to work for. And in no way would the name, would the identity of the employer be revealed. To this day, Mr. Speaker, we do not know who, if anyone, may be that prospective employer. Now it was indicated to me in the radio ad that that implement parts manufacturing concern is to commence operations, employ 350 people this fall, and this was a new factory to locate in that part of Manitoba. To this day we have not heard of that factory locating there and September of 1979 isn't all that far away. And we have heard nothing about it.

So I can't really blame the present Minister, having inherited some programs of that kind because even that one, I am at a loss to know why that radio advertising campaign was launched. I would suspect that the Minister must have got the bright idea that if he collects a briefcase full of job applications, that he will be able to take them to Toronto or to Montreal and put them on some President's desk and say, "Now look, we have a labour supply in Manitoba. We have 350 people anxious and willing to work in Altona as machinists, as die makers, as whatever else that industrial concern called for. And we have got them, if you would locate here."

Well, Mr. Speaker, you know as well as I do that with the level of unemployment that we now have under this government, it's no problem to collect 350 job applications. One could stand at the corner of Portage and Main and within two or three hours, pick up 350 job applications. That's no problem.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know, and I would hope that that government knows that just a labour supply in itself is not the only attracting feature to industry that prompts an industry to locate wherever. That there are many other factors that industry takes into account. Now, what really disturbs my constituents is not what was mentioned disturbing by the seconder of the Throne Speech Debate who, because one's impressions of what one hears really are in the eye and ear of the beholder. And you know the Honourable Member for Radisson told us of the impressions of a relative of his, I believe his father or father-in-law — father — of the opening of this Legislative Session. Well, Mr. Speaker, that evening my wife and I dropped in at my father-in-law's place, who is about the same age as the honourable member's father, he's 88. And he thought it was terrible. He thought that the behaviour of this government was absolutely terrible, the way the behaviour of this government was reflected in the content of the Throne Speech. That was what disturbed him. That was what disturbed him, Mr. Speaker. And that is what is disturbing to most people of the Province of Manitoba. That is what they find disturbing. —(Interjections)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I again remind the members to offer the courtesy to the member who is speaking and please refrain from interjections.

MR. HANUSCHAK: I thank you most sincerely, Mr. Speaker, for your assistance. It's the content of The Throne Speech in the light of some of the two-bit announcements that had been made previously, that's what disturbed him and disturbed many others. Like, no decision with respect to the future of the Seven Oaks Hospital. To this day, Mr. Speaker, and the record proves it, to this day, the Honourable Minister of Health has not clearly, unequivocally indicated the type of program that will be delivered within the Seven Oaks Hospital. He's still teetering and wavering on that.

What he and others find disturbing is a 400 percent increase in the community college tuition

fees. That's what they found disturbing. When they took a look at the increase in school grants and university grants' the pittance that was given to the public schools and the pittance to the universities, that they found disturbing. And the threats of user fees in a whole host of social service programs, that's what they found disturbing. And when those people who are eligible for a Pharmacare card to pay the entire cost of their drugs had lost them, that's what they found disturbing, Mr. Speaker. That is what disturbed them. —(Interjection)—

The Honourable Member for Wolseley says, "Let's have facts," but I would suggest to the Honourable Member for Wolseley that he go into my riding or into any North Winnipeg riding, or into his own for that matter, and into his own, because there are many people in his riding that have been victimized by the actions of this government just as much as those within mine. —(Interjections)— You know, with friends like the Honourable Member for Wolseley, who needs enemies? I feel sorry for the Minister of Education, because the Minister of Education is going to have a problem within the next few days and I don't know how the Minister of Education is going to get himself out of this. Here a very respected man, Dean Martin Wedepohl, whom this government appointed as Chairman of Hydro, so obviously they must have some confidence in him, some respect for him and so forth. And, of course, Mr. Wedepohl, still the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at this point in time, is calling upon the University for an independent review of the University's finances. Well, that's fair ball; that's the university's privilege. They're mature enough and intelligent enough to manage their own affairs.

But, somewhere along the line, for some reason or another, for some unknown reason to me — and I'm quoting from today's Winnipeg Tribune —one paragraph reads as follows: "Dean Wedepohl said Conservative MLA Bob Wilson has already joined him in calling for an outside inquiry."

And I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that there's caucus solidarity on that side of the House and I'm not quite sure how the Minister of Education is going to come to the assistance of the Member for Wolseley who already has committed himself to supporting an independent inquiry. And will the Minister of Education say, "Yes, in view of the fact that one of my colleagues is supporting Dean Wedepohl, therefore I, as Minister of Education, will appoint an independent inquiry."? It will be interesting to see how this whole thing unravels itself and sorts itself out.

So, I think it's become very apparent, looking at the record of this government for the past 15 months, that as far as this government is concerned, canaries and budgies come first and people come second. . And, we were talking about the Seven Oaks Hospital just a moment ago, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, why doesn't the Minister of Health go all the way. He's going to talk about restraint and cutback and the need to economize and the need to cut down on programs. Why doesn't he sit down for a few minutes and check back on some health department reports? Perhaps he could take a page out of a 1936 report and do likewise. Now here's a way to save money. Here's a way that the Minister of that day suggested that money could be saved, and he, the Minister of Health in 1936 was very concerned about increasing health costs from a low in 1933 to 1934 and then there was a slight increase. And he served notice in the report that the costs might continue to increase, and I am quoting from the 1936 Health Department Report, Mr. Speaker: "When they ask why should there be such a rise in expenditures. It would appear that in the present state of our civilization, the individual is becoming less individualistic and more and more inclined to ask some authority to shoulder what used to be deemed as lawful responsibilities. In other words, the care of certain types of mental disease, old age and other infirmities, and this seems to refer particularly to persons suffering from mental disease." Now, listen to this, Mr. Speaker. "Twenty years ago, it was considered a disgrace for a family to have someone in one of our mental institutions, but" and listen to this carefully, Mr. Speaker, "but with the change taking place in the care of these suffering from mental disease and mental defect, and because our then called lunatic asylums have been changed and are now known as hospitals for mental diseases, there does not appear to be any deterrent to heads of families placing those suffering from mental diseases, even in its most mild form in one of our institutions."

There's the answer to the government, Mr. Speaker, change the name. Just think of all the money you would save. Change the name, bring in a bill to change the names, and I suppose that the name of the institution is approved by statute, change the name to lunatic asylum and think of all the money you would save. No one would put their relatives in that type of an institution because of the stigma and embarrassment attached to it; people would keep them at home, as the Minister of 40 years ago recommended, so do likewise. Go all the way with what you are proposing. Go back to your so-called good old days; go back to the thirties, go back to the twenties, and to the turn of the century. You know, you're moving in that direction already, so why pussy-foot; go the full distance.

I would like to . . . and it's strange, it's rather interesting, Mr. Speaker, how attitudes change,

and I want to read to you, and this I'm reading again from documents available to members of this House, because I'm reading from sessional papers and I want you to know that in advance. I want to read to you three quotes from Health Department Reports contained in our library. One quote reads as follows, and I will more completely identify them in a minute or two: "Medical practitioners find themselves hampered by the excessive cost of anti-toxin as a commercial article. People even in fair financial circumstances hesitate over the outlay of \$50 or \$75 for anti-toxin for their families". Now there's sort of a glimmer in the horizon of the Pharmacare Program that we see. That, Mr. Speaker, was in 1908. In 1908 there was a concern expressed about making certain drugs universally available and in the same report there is a sentiment of this sort among physicians and I am convinced that it is true, and that not enough has gotten out of the best resources for controlling disease in the hands of people. And then the same report goes on to say: "If all anti-toxins were kept ready at hand for instant use in free and unlimited quantity in 1908," the Chairman of the Provincial Board of Health, Dr. R.M. Simpson, in reporting to his Minister, recommended a type of a Pharmacare Program, recommended a Pharmacare Program to deal with an epidemic that was of greatest concern to the people of Manitoba at that time and namely diphtheria.

A socialism, Mr. Speaker, a socialism, back in 1908. —(Interjection)— Communism, says the Honourable Member for Inkster, in a government under the leadership of Sir Rodmond Roblin. So obviously if recommendations of this kind came out of his government, he must have been a socialist. And then he goes on to say that: "the additional cost would be relatively small and the extension of employment of anti-toxin would be greatly multiplied."

Now I suppose that Dr. Simpson probably had some problems with the government of the day, and so three years later in reporting to his Minister, he reported in somewhat stronger terms, and he said as follows: "All health organizations are practically helpless unless the means are forthcoming, enabling the taking hold of and dealing with the subject in a broad and comprehensive manner. It is indeed lamentable, and I will go still further and say inhuman, that thousands of valuable lives are allowed to be sacrificed annually and no helping hand is extended to stop the terrible toll exacted. All public benefactions are meritorious, but I claim, that the care of the sick and the alleviation of suffering should command and receive our first consideration, and not the priorities which this government sets up for itself as deserving of first consideration. It is proper to improve the mind and inculcate morality in living, but of what avail if all example and teaching of our bodies are permitted to wither and waste away by disease. Books could be written and sermons preached on this phase of human life."

Then he concludes by saying: "The underlying power is the people. When they become aroused, it then will not be a difficult matter to move governments. I therefore say to the people of Manitoba, give your aid and assistance in the great work at hand."

Well, that's the way that the Chairman of the Provincial Board of Health had to speak at that time. And then in 1915, even in stronger terms. He says, "The horror of the situation is indeed revolting." And then he goes on to describe the state of affairs with respect to the delivery of health services as they exist in the province at the time, and he concludes by saying the following: "The stifling hold of selfishness and aggrandizement must be broken and horse and rider thrown into the sea of everlasting oblivion. The process may be slow, but there cannot be any retrogression of action." And it's coming to that with this government, Mr. Speaker, it's coming to that with this government.

Now, because the government has already demonstrated to us the direction which they are moving insofar as the programs of social assistance, of social benefit are concerned, creating roadblocks, making those services impossible to reach, making them costly, and proceeding in a manner of that kind, it will of its own accord drive itself into oblivion, that's with some programs.

And then with other programs, on which it doesn't have the guts to move, such as the Seven Oaks Hospital, oh, we're studying the hospitals, we're considering options. The Minister of Health said that he's looking at seven options insofar as the future of the Misericordia Hospital is concerned. I don't know what the seven options are. The Member for Wolseley ought to know; he was at a couple of meetings, one anyway, of the people of the Misericordia Hospital area and others. He may know what the seven options are, because the Minister hasn't announced them publicly; he has announced three or four but not the seven. So, that's his standard answer to questions with respect to issues in which he doesn't want to move. Considering options, studying the cost effectiveness, which is what he told the community clinics. The community clinics must prove themselves to be cost effective. And, in other cases he tries to fudge the whole thing over as he did in speaking to a group of nurses, I think it was Members of MONA, when he paid lip service to endorsing a preventative care program.

Mr. Speaker, let me just for a couple of moments turn to another item that was mentioned in

the Throne Speech debate, and that was the announcement of the use of the Ukrainian language as a language of instruction. It's a matter of interest to me, it being my mother tongue. In fact, for the first six or seven years of my life, that was the only language that I spoke until enrolling in school.

"Pane Speaker! Tsikawo bulo pochuty scho tsey uriag obitsiaye wlashtuwaty prohramy dayuchy nahodu na ujytia ukrainskoyi mowy yako mowu nauky. Zauwajuyu takoj scho ani odna ukrainska hazeta nawit slovehka ne spomynaye protsiu obitsianku.

Chomu?

Tomu scho wony tak yak i ya chekayemo pobachyty chy uriad diysno maye namir daty spromohu na rozwytok tseyi prohramy. Dokaz bude u proekti koshtorysu Departmentu Oswity."

Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to hear that this government is planning to institute a program providing for the use of Ukrainian as a language of instruction. I note however, Mr. Speaker, that not one Ukrainian newspaper made any mention, not even one word, of this announcement in the Throne Speech. Why? Because they, as I, are waiting to see whether the government is really sincere in its intent to offer assistance in the development of this program. And the proof, Mr. Speaker, will be in the Estimates of the Department of Education.

Now, it's a valid fear, Mr. Speaker, that those people have, that the people who would want to see such a program instituted, and the fear stems back to 1964, because they can remember the manner in which the teaching of Ukrainian as a second language was introduced into this province, when for the first while, well, first there was no assistance offered to the school divisions to offer the program, number one; number two, those that did make an effort to offer it had to do the best they could. Consequently, it meant that if a student wanted to study Ukrainian he had to give up some other subject. In half-day lots it was Ukrainian or Shops, that type of thing. For a number of years the University did not give credit for Ukrainian as an admission requirement, and so it went for many many years before Ukrainian was properly entrenched into our school system.

So, Mr. Speaker, their concern is, may this not be another hasty, flighty, ill-conceived program that the Honourable Minister of Education says that he would not endorse. And we would like to know, Mr. Speaker, what research had the Minister done prior to coming to this decision. What advice did he receive? And from whom, what planning, what preparation took place, what assistance to divisions will be offered to implement the programs in terms of professional expertise and in terms of dollars and cents? And lastly, when does the Minister plan to implement this program? And in addition, Mr. Speaker, the Ukrainian community in Manitoba would want to know what prompted, what motivated this government to institute this program? Is it some constitutional issue? Is this perhaps this government's way of giving the same status, the same recognition, to Ukrainian as the two official languages, or is it some other motivating factor? What was it? Or is this merely to pay a political debt? Is it to pay a political debt to a number of ridings in this province? And I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that that is exactly the reason, and I also suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that this government is paying that debt in the promise of this program with an I.O.U. That is all that the government is offering, an I.O.U., and goodness knows, when one will be able to redeem that I.O.U. for what it is supposed to be worth.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the Minister would keep two points in mind insofar as this program is concerned, that, number one: the entire Ukrainian speaking community is not asking for this program. So that is going to create a problem for him, and I am not speaking for or against it. If I may at this point in time, Mr. Speaker — you have signalled me that I have one minute to go — it may take me about a minute or two to complete the statement that I want to make, the points that I would want the Minister to keep in mind. Because the entire Ukrainian community is not asking for this program, some are, yes, I agree with that, but those not asking, they will be critical of the government if the government spends money on the program, because by spending the money on this program, those people not asking for the Ukrainian program would say, well, you're shortchanging the rest of the education program because out of the other corner of the Minister's mouth, he is saying that he hasn't got sufficient funds to meet all the needs of the school divisions. So they are going to say, well, but how come you've got money for this program? And if he doesn't spend, if he doesn't give the funds, then he's going to have those pushing for this program, the advocates of this program on his back. Because then they are going to accuse him of lack of sincerity and lack of commitment to the program.

And then there is overall and overriding concern, Mr. Speaker. Will the program make our younger generation better Canadians in terms of developing fluency in a language other than the official languages, one or both of the official languages? Or will the student enrolled in such a program eventually be faced with some handicaps, stumbling blocks to overcome, when it comes to transferring to an anglophone or a francophone program? And that is an assurance that the Minister will have to give the people of Manitoba and not only assurance but indicate to the people of

how he hopes to prevent the stumbling blocks from occurring.

So therefore, Mr. Speaker, I can only say that you can fool, maybe the government feels that they can fool the people of Manitoba, you can't fool them all the time. And the day has come, the day of reckoning isn't that far off when the government will learn that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Before I recognize the next speaker, I would like to ask the Honourable Member for Burrows in the interest of preserving a correct record for Hansard if he would be prepared to give the Ukrainian version and his translation to the recorder at the back of the room.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, I have the Ukrainian version. The translation I have already read into the record, because following the Ukrainian, I had given the English translation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In opening, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to you on your continuing in the post of Speaker. I hold great respect for the manner in which you have handled this Chamber last year and I know that you will continue to perform in the same manner. It is not without some difficulties, as I have observed. At the same time, I would like to offer my congratulations to the Member for Springfield, the mover of the Speech from the Throne, who gave a concise insight into the accomplishments of the government and the shortcomings of the previous government and the present opposition, and also to congratulate the seconder, the Honourable Member for Radisson who, although injecting somewhat more humour into his speech, Mr. Speaker, showed no less insight into the failings of the socialist system.

I should also extend my congratulations to the Leader of the Opposition. I regret that he is not in his seat this evening because I think that some of the comments that I am going to make in my speech, Mr. Speaker, would be of interest to him. But in any case, I do wish to offer my congratulations to him and at the same time to offer my condolences to him because I think that he is going to have a particularly difficult problem now to maintain the moderate image now that the previous social democratic leader is no longer on the scene. I'm afraid that the present Leader of the Opposition is going to have a very difficult time attempting to sell the same old bankrupt socialistic philosophies and still appear to be moderate while having such intelligent members as the Honourable Member for Inkster and the Honourable Member for St. Johns in outlining what are really the socialist policies of the NDP, Mr. Speaker. The leader is going to issue. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition did in fact identify the issue that we should be looking at the record of this government, at the record of the previous government if you wish, at the philosophy of this government, and the philosophy of the honourable members opposite because, as I said previously, there is no more moderate image to be made out for the honourable members opposite. They now must be known for the out and out socialist philosophies for which they stand.

We could look very briefly at the record of accomplishments of this government in the few 16 months that we have been in office, the decrease in the intervention of the productive system; the lowering of taxation; that sort of thing which we said that we would do, Mr. Speaker, and we have in fact done. We have brought about some reality into the financial affairs of this province and in the face of those accomplishments, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said that the connection with reality is totally missing. He said that this government has no connection with reality. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to know who really is out of touch with reality, because the Honourable Leader of the Opposition proceeded to use some statistics which evidently were turned out by one of those economists that they have on the front bench, Mr. Speaker.

If I might just go through those items to demonstrate who really is out of touch with reality, and I'll use the statistics which the honourable gentleman used: He said in Item 1, "The growth in real domestic product which is only two-thirds of the Canadian average and the third lowest in Canada." Well, Mr. Speaker, in fact it is two-thirds of the Canadian average but in 1977 it was one-third of the Canadian average and in our first year of government, it has risen to two-thirds, which in effect is a 100 percent increase because the Canadian growth in real domestic product in 1977 was 3.1 percent; in Manitoba it was 1.2. In 1978, the Canadian growth rate was 3.3 and in Manitoba, 2.2, close to a 100 percent increase, Mr. Speaker. Who is out of touch with reality?

On Item 2: "A 2.5 percent increase in persons employed compared with an increase of 3.2 percent for Canada. This is the third lowest in Canada." Well, Mr. Speaker, there were some statistics which came out recently in the Financial Times, the February 12th edition of the Financial Times, and

it goes back and it lists the average growth, the pre-1978 new positions in the economy. It took in the years 1973 to 1977. You know what the average yearly growth was, Mr. Speaker? — 2. percent over those periods of years when the honourable gentlemen opposite were in government. Yet they take an increase, look at an increase of 2.5 percent, which is higher than the average of those five years, and somehow attempt to make that out as being something that is bad for this economy, Mr. Speaker.

At the same time as they are trying to make out that the employment situation is bad in this province, Mr. Speaker, they ignore the fact that from January of 1978 to January of 1979, there has been an increase of 22,000 in the number of people employed in this province, 22,000 more people employed, an increase in the work force of 18,000, so that the number of employed people has risen 4,000 more than the number of people who have gone into the work force, Mr. Speaker, and they try and make that out as a sign of some weakness in our economy. Well, Mr. Speaker, I wonder again, who really is out of touch with reality when they examine those figures.

An interesting feature that the Honourable Member from Brandon East, when he made his famous press release on the state of the provincial economy in January, he released statistics that showed the percentage change in employment from the previous year, and he pointed out that we only have the 2.5 percent increase in 1978 but he didn't dwell too long on the fact that there was a 1.2 percent increase in 1977. No, he dwelled on 1973 and 1974 when there was a 4.1 and 4.5 percent increase, conveniently left out 1975, when in fact the number of jobs declined in the province, and in 1976 when, following a decline, it still only rose by two percent, Mr. Speaker.

Indeed, who is out of touch with reality? And again, on the rate of unemployment, Mr. Speaker, they say an average annual unemployment rate of 6.6 percent, the highest since the depression years. In fact, in January, 1979, the adjusted rate of unemployment in Manitoba was 5.4 percent, which is in fact the third lowest rate in Canada.

Item 4 of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's devastating thrusts against the government was an increase in manufacturing shipments which is the second lowest in Canada. In fact, there was a 13.5 percent increase over the first nine months in 1978 over the first nine months of the previous year; 13.5 percent. Perhaps it is not as high as we might like it, Mr. Speaker, but in fact, in the previous year, the increase had only been 3.3 percent over the previous nine months. When you start from the base that the honourable member opposite left in this province when they departed from government in October 1977, then if you can get a 13.5 percent increase in manufacturing shipments, then you have got to look at that as being a move in the right direction, Mr. Speaker.

Another interesting item which is open to considerable interpretation is that he said that there was an increase in retail sales of 9.9 percent, the lowest in Canada. Well, you know it is just possible that when you couple that with the fact that there was a 10.2 percent increase in private investment in Manitoba, which was double the previous year and four percentage points higher than the Canadian average, perhaps Manitobans have decided to invest a little of their money, Mr. Speaker, instead of spending it on something they can't afford. And that is something that this government is attempting to do, is to bring our spending into line with something that we can afford.

Item 6 was an increase in average weekly earnings which was surpassed by an inflation rate of over nine percent. This means that real wages in Manitoba declined in 1978. Well, Mr. Speaker, much as we might like to see wage rates increase at a greater rate than inflation, perhaps there is a sign in this figure that the people of Manitoba are coming to realize they are getting in touch with reality, that you can not go on chasing inflation forever and expect to wage rates that are greater than inflation. And just as this government recognizes that, I think there are signs that perhaps the people of this province are coming to realize it.

Item 7 was an increase in total investment of one percent compared with 6.1 percent for Canada as a whole and I would like to point out to the First Minister, in response to his earlier interjection, that while private investment increased by 6.9 cent last year, in 1976 during the New Democratic Party Administration, private investment increased by 25.2 percent. I am quoting the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the private sector invested in 1978 rose by more than 10.2 percent which, as I have said, must be compared with a 6.2 percent increase for Canada as a whole. Indeed the public sector spending did decline in Manitoba primarily through reductions in the spending on Hydro construction and surely the honourable members opposite are not going to go and advocate again further expenditure of public money for the development of hydro power at this stage.

Let's look at the figure of 25.2 percent increase in 1976 in private sector investment, Mr. Speaker. In 1976 the private sector investment across Canada was 25 percent. So in fact, Manitoba was only 25 percent above the Canadian average. We look at 1978, we were four percentage points above the Canadian average or 66 percent higher than the Canadian average.

Mr. Speaker' these are the same figures that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition finds so distressing. I keep coming back — who in fact is out of touch with reality when you look at figures like these and somehow read into them signs of a deteriorating economy?

And again, the famous economic authority from Brandon East . has said in his statement that Manitoba had the dubious distinction of being the only province in Canada to suffer a decline in public sector spending. Well, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that that is one thing that most of the people pro in this vince and most of the people in Canada realize is something that has to come about. That the level of public sector spending over the past decade has increased to the point where it simply has sapped away the incentive for the private sector to carry out the role that they should rightfully be carrying out.

The Item 9 that the Leader of the Opposition had that dealt with out-migration from the province, Mr. Speaker, that it was up three thousand, the average has been running approximately six thousand and perhaps again, it reflects reality rather than unreality in that people realize that there is a base to support an economy where the resources are. If the jobs are somewhere else, even though there are 22,000 more in Manitoba this year than there was last year at this time, if people see an opportunity somewhere else, then they are going. The honourable members opposite would try, and their stay option is an example of this, Mr. Speaker, where they would pretend that you can make opportunities exist anywhere, irrespective of the resources that exist in that area. That's the sort of socialist philosophy that is in fact out of touch with reality.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition — item 9 — said that if this government had cause for reasonable satisfaction with the increases in the economy, with the improvement in the economy, then he thought that Manitobans should have no cause for satisfaction. How he can arrive at that conclusion, Mr. Speaker, with employment up 22,000 over the previous year, unemployment running at 5.4 percent, or the third lowest in Canada; private investment up 10.2 percent over the previous year; and manufacturing shipments, for instance, are up 12.5 percent which is the first increase since 1974 — that's manufacturing investments. In 1975, manufacturing investment declined 15.7 percent. In 1976, it declined 14.4; in 1977, it declined 1.9.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we've turned a lot of these things around in the past 16 months and we do have reasonable cause for satisfaction with the improvements in the economy.

Those are just some examples, Mr. Speaker, of how the honourable gentlemen opposite are in fact out of touch with reality. I would suggest that the reason the honourable gentlemen opposite are out of touch with reality is that their whole socialist philosophy is out of touch with reality, that their philosophy of statism and interventionism, state control, regulation, envy — you name all the philosophies, the principles that they base their philosophy on and I suggest they are, in fact, out of touch with reality.

Another statement from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition was that he recognized that public expenditures have dramatically outraced the available revenues to government. He said, "The tendency has created a fiscal crisis which is confronted by all governments. Government response to this crisis has normally consisted of one or more various possible solutions, but," he said, Mr. Speaker, "this government has so clearly demonstrated in the Throne Speech that it has chosen the most hideous, the most damaging, the most heartless of solutions to a very, very complex problem." The one thing that he did get correct on that, Mr. Speaker, was that it is a very, very complex problem. It is not one that is going to be worked out by centralist state planners, and although he may say that our solution is a heartless one, I suggest that their solution is a mindless one and it is, in fact, no less heartless in the long run that ours might be perceived by the honourable members to be at this point. Because what is more heartless, Mr. Speaker, than to refuse to recognize the reality of an economy, that somehow it's possible to go on spending wealth that is not there? That, Mr. Speaker, is in fact a heartless solution in the long run.

One rather light, almost humorous, reference that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made and demonstrated his being out of touch with reality was his reference to the Saunders' Aircraft, to the 10 Saunders' aircraft, where one of these relics had sold for \$650,000 some two or three years ago, Mr. Speaker, and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition cannot perceive, cannot understand' how someone today wouldn't still pay \$780,000 or \$650,000 for one of those albatrosses for which there would be no product support, Mr. Speaker. They simply are out of touch with reality in terms of that situation and of many others.

A MEMBER: Now that they've got their own Red Baron.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the reason that they're out of touch with reality, Mr. Speaker, is, as I have said, their socialist philosophy virtually demands that they be out of touch with reality. If I could take a few more quotes from the reply that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made to the Speech from the Throne, we'll demonstrate that.

He said, "The New Democratic Party alternative is to stimulate the economy by undertaking

the public creation of wealth. This would be done by Public Works' projects such as hospitals and personal care facilities and the development of other projects." Public creation of wealth. Mr. Speaker, the public does not create wealth in the manner that the honourable members opposite seem to feel that wealth is created. They do not understand the basis of wealth. You simply don't create wealth by going out and spending money.

A MEMBER: Not spending money is work.

And the government doesn't do that. The money that the government has is taken from the pockets of taxpayers who in fact work. The government does not, unless we pursue the socialist philosophy to its ultimate conclusion where the government then has control over the production process, Mr. Speaker, and that is the philosophy that the honourable members stand for and that is the philosophy that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is going to have great difficulty in covering up now.

They then proceed to further show their lack of understanding, Mr. Speaker, when they made reference to the mining industry and the oil and gas exploration situation in the provinc. And I regret that I was in a meeting this afternoon and was unable to be here to hear the Honourable Member for Inkster's speech because I understand that he dwelt on this subject but I'll have an opportunity to review his remarks and we will no doubt debate that at Estimate time.

But what the honourable members don't seem to understand, Mr. Speaker, is the competitive nature of the mining industry and of the oil and gas industry. They seem to think that somehow they see a company that has something; they are envious of that and they wish immediately to become part owners or to prevent them from making what they would refer to as windfall profits, not realizing that profits are the one way that industry has of providing money for reinvestment. Mr. Speaker, we believe in taking a fair return for the people of the province through taxation but we do not believe in driving out industry by imposing compulsory participation agreements in mining on them, etc. We don't want to be further involved in the investment of money in oil exploration, for instance. The Honourable Member for Inkster is a little disturbed by the fact we've drawn out of that but they should realize that for an investment of \$900,000 in oil exploration that the government had made over the past few years, we have, to this point, returned roughly \$54,000 and the projected annual return is going to be in the neighbourhood of \$20,000.00.

That's a legitimate philosophy that they hold, Mr. Speaker, but what really gave away the misunderstanding of those honourable members was the remark that the Member for St. Johns made from his seat when there was reference to the loss of jobs, the reduction of jobs at Thompson in October of 1977, and that was decried by the members opposite and someone said, "What would you do?" and he said, "Buy them out."

Now, that is the sort of understanding that the honourable members have, that somehow, if the government was to buy out INCO, that it would not have been necessary to have that reduction of 600 people in the work force. They somehow believe that if government owns it, they could ignore the realities of the international metal markets, that they would be able to continue to employ those people, whereas INCO could not. Mr. Speaker, that is why I say that they must be out of touch. It is inherent in their philosophy that they must be out of touch because once you depart from having some yardstick of profit to measure the viability of an operation, the productivity of an operation, then you lose sight of what the real basis of wealth is. And if those honourable members think that they could buy out mining companies and continue to employ people when a market doesn't exist, then, Mr. Speaker, that is a good reason, one more good reason why the people of this province are very likely to keep them in opposition for some years to come. —(Interjection)— Well, the honourable member doesn't want to distinguish, Mr. Speaker, between a productive enterprise that can be handled by the private sector doing what they are supposed to do in producing wealth in the most efficient manner possible, and something like education which . . . —(Interjection)— No, I am not saying it is non-productive. There are some things, Mr. Speaker, that a government is more capable of doing than the private sector is capable of doing. What the honourable gentlemen opposite have trouble distinguishing is between those two things, Mr. Speaker, and they continue to want to be in control of everything. They want to intervene in the productive lives of people as well as carrying out the things that are recognized as basic services that government must provide.

A further example of the socialist philosophies, Mr. Speaker, is a statement like this, where he said, "I say to the members opposite, if they would like to stimulate purchasing power in the Province of Manitoba to ensure there is development of greater productive activity in the province, then what better way would there be, what better way than to place more purchasing power in the hands of those that are lowest paid, the working poor in the Province of Manitoba?" Well, Mr. Speaker, there is an example of how the honourable members opposite confuse what may be a desirable objective in terms of raising the well-being of people, of the working poor in the province, but inherent

in that recommendation that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has here is that you are going to take away that wealth from people who have it and redistribute it.

That, Mr. Speaker, is something in which there is a point of diminishing returns, which the honourable members opposite don't seem to recognize, that somehow you can continue to take money away from the productive sector of the economy and give it to the less productive sector. There has to be a limit, Mr. Speaker, to how far that can go and I suggest the honourable members opposite have not recognized what that limit might be.

As one further example of their misunderstanding, and it is a good basis, Mr. Speaker . . . I'm glad that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition in fact said that we should compare philosophies and we should look at the records. I think that is an excellent thing to do, Mr. Speaker, and I would hope that the honourable members opposite will deal with their philosophies and their record later on and not spend their time worrying about bird seed and other seemingly important things that the Honourable Member for Burrows has been dealing with.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would just reiterate that these are the sorts of things that seem to motivate the socialist philosophy: the intervention in the economy; the redistribution of wealth; the lack of understanding of the basis of productivity; and envy. Envy, I would suggest, is one of the great driving forces of the socialists.

What the Province of Manitoba now has and what the country does not yet have, but soon will have, is a government that understands what the basis of wealth is; they understand the limits of spending; they understand the role of productivity; they understand the overwhelming desire that people have to have some liberty and to be free from the suffocating controls of government. Those are things that this government recognizes, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest that the honourable members opposite do not recognize that — they have not recognized it — and as long as we continue to pursue those policies, then we will improve the human condition in this province. We may make mistakes, we don't say that we won't make mistakes, but they are not inherent in our system as they are inherent, as mismanagement is inherent, in the system of the members opposite. The honourable members opposite took eight years to demonstrate their inability, the ineffectiveness of the socialist philosophy, their inability to govern effectively, and they are now, over the past 16 months, demonstrating their ineffectiveness to be opposition.

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion, the Honourable Member for St. George.

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, unless there are any other members who wish to speak, I propose to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to join in the debate on the Throne Speech and like my colleagues, the other members of the government, I would like to congratulate you not only on handling your job as being Speaker, but also being a very capable movie producer. I think that the Member for Springfield, in his job, in what he has done to speak to the Throne Speech and also the capable manner in which the Member for Radisson seconded the motion, I am sure they should be congratulated. I would also like to say that it appears that the members opposite — and I think it should be put on the record — have pretty well run down the spring which appeared to be a year ago something of a real attack on the government, what was taking place, and I think the past few days have heard really the real true direction and seen what has taken place and I, as a minister of the Crown, am very pleased to be a part of that.

I think it is only fitting, Mr. Speaker, that we take a look at some of the past in Agriculture, in particular as the effect of agriculture, the economy of the agricultural industry in rural Manitoba has a direct relationship on the total economy of Manitoba. Let's just take a look at one of the comments that was made by the Leader of the Opposition in saying that the management of the government has proved to be very inefficient, the loss of business and reducing Manitoba's real economic growth. I think it is only fair that I point out some of the things that really took place in the past few years in agriculture and I think we should start with one of the programs that also the Member for Fort Rouge had pointed out was a program that we, as a Conservative government, were cutting from the people of Manitoba and was going to be a great loss.

But before I do that, I think I should just mention the real growth in agriculture that took place in the past year. We look at the value of crop production from the years 1975 to 1977, it stayed relatively stable at just over the \$1 billion, but last year a preliminary estimate shows the value of agricultural production in Manitoba to be \$1.5 billion, approximately, an increase of some 27 percent in the value of production in Manitoba's agriculture. I think it's also fair to note, Mr. Speaker,

that the value of farm cash income went from something like what had been in the neighbourhood of \$900 million in the past three years to well over the \$1 billion of cash returned to farmers this last year, an increase of 25 percent, the highest in all of Canada. I'm sure that the people of Manitoba, the inputs that went from the people who are the strongest base that we have, really are to be commended for their efforts and the way they have managed their operations.

When we stop and look at the Farm Diversification Program, the FDP program, which I think I would like to just mention here briefly, we're looking at, over the past eight years, when we add the total Beef Income Assurance money, the cost of administration and the direct grants that went to 2,600 farmers in the province, it totalled over \$16 million to 2,600 farmers. Less than 10 percent of the farmers in the Province of Manitoba received that kind of money, and we, this one year, have shown the total increase from people who did not participate in those kind of programs to show a 25 percent increase in cash incomes.

We've had comment from the Member for Fort Rouge about the reduction in staff, of how agriculture was going to suffer in Manitoba. Well, let us take a look at, with the introduction of the ARDA program, that we had an increase in staffing, something like 40 percent. With the numbers of people, the numbers of staff people per farmer in that program equalled one staff person to eight farmers, a ratio, I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that was richer than any province could ever afford and I'm sure that the agricultural sector didn't gain five cents from it.

When we look at the development of rural Manitoba, the agricultural industry, we should just stop and take a look at some of the proposed ventures that were proposed for Manitoba, particularly some of the outlying areas in the past few years. I should mention the proposed rapeseed plant that was to be built in Brandon by a group of local investors some several years ago. They had plans made, they had studies done, and they planned to go ahead until the then Minister of Agriculture promised them if they were to go ahead and build their plant as private investors, that he would take government money and invest in one in another region not too far away and the decision was not to invest.

I think we could also refer to another company that had the same kind of plans but because of the fact that they were a multi-national corporation, a corporation I believe by the name of Kraft, that that company decided not to build in Western Manitoba.

So when we talk of the economic opportunities or the members opposite refer to the economic opportunities that were created under their administration, I think it's only fair to point out the ones that they kept from coming into this province.

Let's talk about the staff and the morale and what rural agricultural people were receiving under the last administration. We had, in the past, a real good core of agricultural representatives throughout Manitoba. They, unfortunately, because of some of the directives that came down from the office of the ministry, Mr. Speaker, decided that they did not want any part of pushing political programs such as Beef Income Assurance Programs, Farm Diversification people. In fact, Mr. Speaker, they were directed that they were only to work with, they were to spend at least 50 percent of their time with 2,600 farmers in the province. The top third of the farmers in Manitoba were deprived of the Department of Agriculture staff. They, Mr. Speaker, were to hold the hands of those that would never make farmers, I'm telling you, if we had a program for the next 50 years.

Let us also take a look, Mr. Speaker, at another program that we're being heavily criticized for dropping and that, Mr. Speaker, happens to be the Rural Water Services Program. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Rural Water Services Program, as was in place under the regional ARDA program, is being disbanded, and individuals who were employed in that program, as were told a year ago, would not have employment after that program as all the other ARDA employees would not be employed because of the fact that the job wouldn't be there. Can any Manitoban justify employing a person if you don't have a job for them? I don't think, Mr. Speaker, if you're to make a make-work program for a government employee, that you're doing the individual, the people of the province, or the industry one iota of good.

But let's take a look at what we are proposing as far as Rural Water is concerned, and that is source development. I think one of the most important things governments can do is provide infrastructure for the development of crop production, industry and domestic use and that, Mr. Speaker, is where our efforts will be exerted.

Let's just stop to take a look at another program, Mr. Speaker, and that, of course, being the famous Land Lease Program which over the period of time that it was in place, the government, in direct competition to young family farm people who wanted to get into the farming business, bought 550 farms for over \$20 million on a lease-back program, Mr. Speaker, and my understanding was that they were not to buy a farm unless they had a lease or a tenant for that particular operation. Well, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you for the record that there were more farms bought, I am sure, that were leased afterwards than anyone ever intended to have a lease previous to the purchase of the land. Direct competition for the NDP government, the direct opposition to young family farmers

— government intervention.

Let us just talk briefly, Mr. Speaker, about some of the marketing programs that were introduced by the last government of the province. The philosophy of that government, Mr. Speaker, was that they were the individuals who should get involved in the merchandising of agricultural products. No, Mr. Speaker, they wouldn't think of putting together a meeting that would pay attention to the more broader movement of grain to encourage the industry, the private sector and the Federal Government to look at one of the major problems. No, Mr. Speaker, they had to get down on the farm and in the day-to-day operations and actually draw up contracts. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think we should bring to the attention of the House the exact figures that were lost in the black bean venture to Cuba. The final loss to the province — and this is what you call people who were supposed to be managing our funds — \$173,700.00. That was the black bean disaster.

Mr. Speaker, another program that they couldn't see fit to really carry on and strengthen and work with was the development of young farm people through 4-H programs and through home economists. Mr. Speaker, I think that if my figures are correct that we had approximately 20-some home economists spread throughout rural Manitoba but at the end of the eight years of the rule of the individuals opposite, they were reduced to something in numbers of 10. The farm people had lost 10 home economists. But in return, Mr. Speaker, they can justify probably some of the educational grants which were paid out to one of their farm organizations which were strong supporters of them. That happened to be, Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Farmers' Union representing something like 800 farmers, or 3 percent of the farmers in Manitoba, received grants in the neighbourhood of \$87,239.00. Mr. Speaker, those were the kind of programs, Mr. Speaker, that the rural people had to live with.

Let us take a look at another program, Mr. Speaker, and that, of course, being the Water Services. The directive under the last administration who are for the great rural party, had a directive that the towns of under 350 couldn't be serviced through government programs. Well, Mr. Speaker, we are working on a program that we can service all the rural towns in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to go back and . . . —(Interjection)— No, Mr. Speaker, I think we should have it clear on the record that the towns under 350 could not expect any government help in the installation of water and sewer in their towns. Mr. Speaker, let the small towns die and support all the big towns — that was the policy of the last administration. That, Mr. Speaker, is what you call a stay-option. Stay small and get smaller. Great support for rural Manitoba. —(Interjections)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I realize all members of the Chamber want to get involved in the debate. I hope you also realize that we can only have one speaker on the floor at a time and I know that you're all so anxious to get involved but I will allocate your time according to the first one that is recognized.

The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I missed one point that I would like to refer to at this particular time and we'll have to go back to the marketing issue and I think that there have been a lot of questions asked in the past few years on a particular involvement of the government in a contract to Japan. I'm sure that in some of the debates in the House — would just like to refer to some of them — it was a question asked by Mr. Barkman of the Minister of Agriculture of the day about the contract and the type of agreement that was signed. Of course, until that particular time — this happened in March, 1973 — at that particular time the government said they had nothing to do with it; it was the Hog Marketing Board. Well, I don't believe it was totally the Hog Marketing Board. From what the Hansard record shows, the Minister had a fair amount to do with it. He claimed that, "The members opposite want to disregard the fact that the agreement entered into is a formula agreement. It is not a single price agreement because no board can enter into a fixed price agreement for a three-year period. It's a moving price formula." So he was quite aware of the type of contract that was entered into.

I think it continues on. On March 14th, another question, and the reply was: "Mr. Speaker, I suggest to members opposite that they not knock a good thing because it's giving the producers of hogs in Manitoba an opportunity to enter into long-term arrangements through Legislative framework, through the assistance of the Manitoba Marketing Board under the direction of my department."

Well, Mr. Speaker, we carry on. Apparently the Member for Gladston, my colleague beside me, asked a question. I think it was originally asked by the past Member for Arthur, Mr. Doug Watt. He said, "Mr. Speaker, the Member for Gladstone, he suggested that it would be a sad day when we found out that somehow the hog producers sold their hogs at 32 cents when the current market is 50 cents." Well, I agree with him, that it would be a sad day if that's the kind of agreement

that was entered into.

A MEMBER: It was a sad day.

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess that sad day is fast approaching because it appears from some preliminary estimates that have been put together by my department that the particular agreement that was entered into cost the hog producers of Manitoba approximately \$2.75 million for their participation in that contract. The statement made by the then Minister, Mr. Speaker, said, "We were successful in launching a first long term arrangement in the supply of pork to Japan." And nobody really knew what the cost was.

Mr. Speaker, there's another particular point that should be brought to the attention of the House, and it was by the Member from Morris, Mr. Speaker Jorgenson. But now, Mr. Speaker, when they made the sale to Japan, when the sale was made to Japan, Sir, he was very quick to rush to the podium at the NDP Convention and make the announcement. Why didn't he let the Hog Marketing Board make that announcement? Oh no. That sounded at the time, Sir, as though it might be a very political convenient thing for him to do. So, Mr. Speaker, I think that the evidence is pretty much before us of what really did happen with the involvement of the then government when they were involved in the actual marketing or pretended they were involved in the actual marketing of a produce for Manitoba producers.

Not only did they lose \$2.75 million for the Hog Producers of Manitoba, the production of hogs went from 1,300,000 hogs to 800,000 hogs today.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. May I suggest to the Honorable Member for St. George who previously attempted to adjourn debate that he will have his opportunity to debate in the House. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at another program, or another Act that was participated in by the last government. There has been certain discussion over the past few weeks of the participation of Manitoba in the National Broiler Agency. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it should be very plain that the Canadian share of the market has been shared on a good-neighbourly basis over the past few years and we really didn't give up anything by signing the National Agreement, but what we did gain, Mr. Speaker, in return was the freedom for an individual producer to go out and develop and provide for a market that he can develop for himself. The restrictions were removed on off-shore sales of broilers out of Manitoba. Something, Mr. Speaker, that I am sure will not only benefit producers today, and I am sure that the Member for St. George could live with that kind of an agreement, because he is very much involved in the producing of a product, that is very heavily controlled.

Mr. Speaker, I think there have been some other discussions and I would just like to bring them to the attention of the House, and that has been the Beef Income Assurance Program which I am sure we are all very much familiar with. It's one of those contracts that not really encourage the producers to stay in beef but it was let on that it was one of those great programs that they were going to support, the beef producers of Manitoba, that Mr. Speaker, we would be able to maintain our cow herds and that things would be great.

Well let me tell you what really happened, Mr. Speaker, and we've been accused of writing off millions of dollars. Let me tell you for the record, Mr. Speaker, that the last administration, they say there is \$40 million owed to the government. That is not correct, Mr. Speaker. The contract reads that they are to pay back an amount of money over and above the price that was established at this particular time of the contract. But they let out \$10 million for people who wanted to opt for the federal program or for reasons that were satisfactory to the department. Mr. Speaker, they have already let \$10 million of that \$40 million go.

I would also like to say, Mr. Speaker, that when we look at what has really happened with the beef contract done, Mr. Speaker, it is jeopardizing the beef producers of the province right at this particular time. Mr. Speaker, it's what you call a price levelling instrument. It not only puts a floor price for the price of beef but it put a ceiling price for them. Redistribution of wealth, I am sure you could call it.

I would also like to say that I think that when we look at what happened in the beef industry, we can look at some of the underlying ambitions of the Minister of the Day to take complete control of the beef marketing, the beef production in this Province. I think you're right on, Sir, take complete control of the only real free enterprise group of people that are left in this Province.

We'll also look, Mr. Speaker, at the crop such as rapeseed, where we have seen an increase of 120 per cent and possibly, Mr. Speaker, if the atmosphere in the province, some four to five years ago had been a little different, we would have been able to process more of that crop in

Western Manitoba and the job opportunities would have been a lot greater, but because of a philosophy of the government and the actions of the day, we do not have that particular plant in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we should take a minute to just discuss some of the other programs and I think they're going to not only add to the job opportunities but to the total economy and that is also the potential production of soybeans. We are working in the area of research on a type of soybean that is suitable to the climate that is in Manitoba. I am sure that these types of crops will not only provide new opportunities for the farmers but will provide new opportunities for the processors that may want to establish in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I think probably we will leave the marketing of the products to the people whose business is marketing. We'll leave the job of research and helping with infra structure to working with the university where a lot of the valuable work takes place that supports farmers. And the infrastructure for providing water for irrigational purposes, for industrial use, and for commercial use, that is where the responsibility of government lies and that is where we plan to work.

We should, just before closing, Mr. Speaker, mention briefly the grain handling and transportation meeting that was held recently in Winnipeg at the initiative of the Premier of the Province. Not only, Mr. Speaker, the Premier of Manitoba but the Premiers of the Western Provinces, truly seeing the most important industry and the products that could add the largest amount of return to the economies of the Western Provinces in the shortest period of time. And that, of course, was to be able to move a product which is sitting on the farms in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, move that product to the markets that are there. They have been identified in the neighbourhood of some \$300 million to \$400 million.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the overall picture — and my friend opposite asks me what is my position on the statutory rates. I am sure that the discussions that have taken place throughout the agricultural community in the past few weeks have been most helpful, in hearing farmers speak out, something that never happened in the past eight years. The farm organizations were never listened to. I would have to say that my position on the statutory rates, that the benefits of those rates should be retained for the farmers of Western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I think that when we look at the overall benefits of what are derived from the Crow rates or from the statutory rates and we look at the total agricultural industry as far as the whole picture, I think there is room for review. That particular review is going on at this present time. I'm not saying that the statutory rates should be changed but there has to be a platform provided for the people involved in the industry to speak out. And that is what is taking place at this particular time.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in closing I just again would like to say that —(Interjection)— I am certainly pleased to hear the Minister of Highways come in because it's a good time to speak on that, because I am sure with the Highways Strengthening Program which will be introduced to help some of the rural communities that are losing their railroads, that he's going to want to speak to that in his reply.

So, Mr. Speaker, again I would like to say that the total rural agriculture and the total economy of rural Manitoba has seen a tremendous year, a record high in agricultural production and cash returns and look forward to that for the next few years under the Conservative Government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honorable Member for Roblin.

MR. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the motion that is before the House at this time, before I delve into the innards of the motion of the Honourable Interim Leader of the Official Opposition, I express my gratitude to you, Sir, and wish you well in the year that is ahead. I would publicly like to thank you and express my personal appreciation and those of the people of the constituency for the able manner in which you looked after my responsibilities while I was ill since the last session.

I should also, Mr. Speaker, notify the members opposite that I am quite familiar with the bed sheets of hospitals now and all you fanatics over there that want to raise questions during this session or any time in the future about the way bed sheets are handled in hospitals, I can assure you I am an expert. I found in my experiences that the sheets are changed on a very regular and prompt basis; they are always clean; the manner in which the staff handle the sheets is very skillful, without any wrinkles in the sheets; and one person is able to lie on them afterwards and be very comfortable and enjoy a good rest. May I recommend to the members opposite, any time in the days ahead that you feel that your health is failing you during this session or the sessions that are going to go on through the length and breadth of this government and you want to relax and get away from it all, I can highly recommend the hospital in Russell, the medical staff there. The para-professionals will give you excellent care and I'm sure you will come out better than you went in.

Mr. Speaker, I maybe should express the appreciation of the people of the Roblin constituency to the former Leader of the Opposition, who has been made Governor -General of our country since we last met. His good wife, of course, was born and raised in Roblin constituency, so we do wish him well. I wish that the same could be said for him in Eastern Canada, reading some of the press releases that are coming out of the East regarding the appointment of this gentlemann, if in fact he has joined the Liberal Party, as a lot of people are saying. I don't know. It's very difficult at this time, from this far distance, to ascertain if he did become a Liberal. A lot of people feel that he did. And I guess there are many reasons why he likely would want to join the Liberal Party because the opposition in its present form is likely one of the reasons why he got out.

I know the First Minister of this country, some of the things he said about Liberals over the years that he once described the Grits as a spineless herd, I think it was he called them one time. A couple of years before he joined the Liberal Party, he called them was it a bunch of idiots or words or terminology along those lines.

So while we do wish to former Leader of the Opposition well, he's maybe in a very difficult and delicate position there. I see his name is coming out on Liberal literature now for the election campaign, so it doesn't look as rosy as I thought it would, or as the people in my constituency would the appointment. So I hope that the former Leader of the Opposition will cool it and give the decor to the position that it deserves. It's a difficult time for Canada but I'm sure when he's had some time in office that the thing will come out a lot better than it has up tu the present time.

May I as well wish the party opposite every success in your leadership contest that you'll be facing in the very near future. I had, at one time, thought that in our area we would be supporting the Honourable Member for Inkster but we have a sort of a Bobby Kennedy of the NDP party by the name of Harafiuk now in Swan River who is apparently a dark horse and is appearing on the scenes as maybe one of the better candidates that may take it all before the shooting is all over.

But regardless of who occupies the Chair, I'm sure that we will be worthy opponents to whoever it is and it will be a full-time job for him to match wits with our ministers and our government and keep up with the programs and the progress that we're going to bring to the province.

Mr. Speaker, may I again express my appreciation to the mover and the seconder of the motion. Movers and seconders of the main motion always bring some interesting facets of history or records to the Hansard and the records of the province. The Honourable Member for Springfield mentioned, I believe, that the first grain, or at least a large part of the first parcel of grain that was exported from Manitoba, came from Springfield which was something that I had never known in my limited knowledge of the province. The other interesting facet was that the Municipality of Springfield, I guess, is the oldest municipal corporation in Western Canada. I find those were very important bench marks to have put into the records of our great province.

The genial, of course, and very able Member for Radisson came through, as he is known to do now on a regular basis, with a new flower in his lapel, the fleur-de-lis. He spoke French very fluently and ied exemplif a new talent that I didn't know he had and that was his knowledge of the medical profession to protect his Speaker, whom he now is the Deputy for. I'm sure that any others that may befall the ill health of a similar ailment as the Speaker, can go to the Honourable Member for Radisson now and get a very quick treatment as to how to get over that malady.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech that is before us at this time is a very exciting document, one that I'm sure is going to add a lot of depth to the government of this province. We have a lot of things here for the people that they have been waiting for for some time and which we are more than pleased as a party to present to the House and to Manitoba in this session of the Legislature. The White Paper recommendation is one for the rationalization of federal and provincial tax rebates and certainly one I think that deserves study before we go much longer in this rebate system. I think that there will be a lot of interesting debates and discussions come out of that from the White Paper so I look forward to the results of it.

Some of the other highlights that have created a lot of interest is the possibility of extending the retail sale of liquor to private vendors. I think it's worthy of investigation. The e's many jurisdictions in the country and around the world today that use that method of offering liquor for sale and I see no reason why we should not at least look at it in this province.

Another highlight of the Throne Speech that I find is the one of the insurance, the matter of investigating where Autopac has gone, where it's going, what the intent is for the future. I have never been able to justify that this is the answer to all the insurance problems of the people of this province. Some of the greatest insurance industries in North American today are home-based right in this province: Portage la Prairie Mutual, Wawanesa, and the Co-op Insurance are a very able and capable people in the insurance field. I don't see any reason why at this time a government should be of the opinion of the Honourable Member for Inkster and tells them if they come in on

a one-way ticket from Portage la Prairie to discuss a better or at least look at the insurance matters of this province, or from Wawanesa, or if they even come from Regina, from the Co-op office there to take a look at the future of insurance because it's getting to be a big burden on the people that are buying insurance. At the time when the Autopac came on, they promised us all these cheap rates and all the things that it was going to do for the insurance industry and for the motorist. Maybe it has done a lot of things but it's becoming very expensive now as most drivers know. The accident rate hasn't gone down; the claims are increasing and it looks like the corporation is going to ask for a fairly substantial increase in its rates. So I welcome the opportunity to have the government investigate the role of the private and the public insurance sectors in all categories in this province.

I certainly appreciate the interest that the government has shown in our senior citizens and that they will be sort of setting up a department to try and look at the future and develop new programs, new ways, new means to deal with the ever-growing number of problems that our senior citizens seem to be facing today due to inflation and the high cost of government and the lack of dollars, etc., etc.

The legislation to protect the travel agency. I don't think anybody can quarrel with that item, Mr. Speaker. The new policy to allow Crown lands for sale in the province is one that's been awaiting many, many farmers for years, and years, and years. The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose, I'm sure will vote for that one. I don't see how he could vote any other way than support that legislation. Any time I've ever been in the Ste. Rose area, number one on the farmers' agenda in the Ste. Rose area is: When are you going to pass the legislation allowing us to have access and purchase of the Crown lands?

The Health and Social Service programs that are mentioned in the Throne Speech are very important and I'm sure will get the full co-operation of myself and the people from Roblin constituency. The pilot program for the Ukrainian immersion classes in the early grades of our school system which the Honourable Member for Burrows footsied around over there for the last 15 or 20 minutes trying to get out of a very difficult position. I can tell him quickly how he can get out of it: vote against it when it comes up and you'll save yourself all the embarrassment of trying to skate around it. It's not very easy to skate around an issue in politics. You're better to either say yes or no and not try and talk yourself out of it. I'm sure a lot of the members opposite are going to have as difficult a time with that one as they did with the French . . . Oh, the aid to private and parochial schools. That was a touchy one across the way. This one I'm sure, will create a lot of anxiety and some sleepless nights from the members opposite but you can rest assured we're going to pass it and I'm certain it's long overdue. The constituency that I represent especially is, I daresay, 80 to 85 percent people of Ukrainian background and ancestry who will, I'm sure, pat us on the back for bringing this legislation into our school system. So I tell the Honourable Member for Burrows, make up your mind quickly and vote for it. If you vote against it, I don't think you'll ever be back occupying a chair in this Legislature.

We shall go on, Mr. Speaker, with the program that the government has laid before us. I think it is an interesting program and one that's going to keep us busy for the next while and I'm sure the debate will be interesting and rather lengthy. Rather than proceed then and hold up the debates of the House, Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the Leader of the Official Opposition and his Party that I will not be supporting their motion that is on it before us at this time. There are several reasons that maybe . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I want to inform the honourable member that he will have 25 minutes when we next deal with this subject matter.

The hour being 10 o'clock, . . . the Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Pembina, that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow (Thursday). .